

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION

In respect of

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING & RECORDING

At

CROFT AN RIGH

For

Historic Environment Scotland

By

Kirkdale Archaeology



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30th September 2016

INTRODUCTION

OS Grid Reference: NT 265 732 – NT 296 721

HS Index Number: 90131

A programme of archaeological works conducted by Kirkdale Archaeology is required in order to monitor the work associated with the proposal to remove the existing stair leading from Croft an Righ to the Palace gardens and to replace it with a like-for-like structure. The new stair will be at a reduced incline, and as such will require fixing and foundations at a new location; ground breaking works will be required for the new foundation.

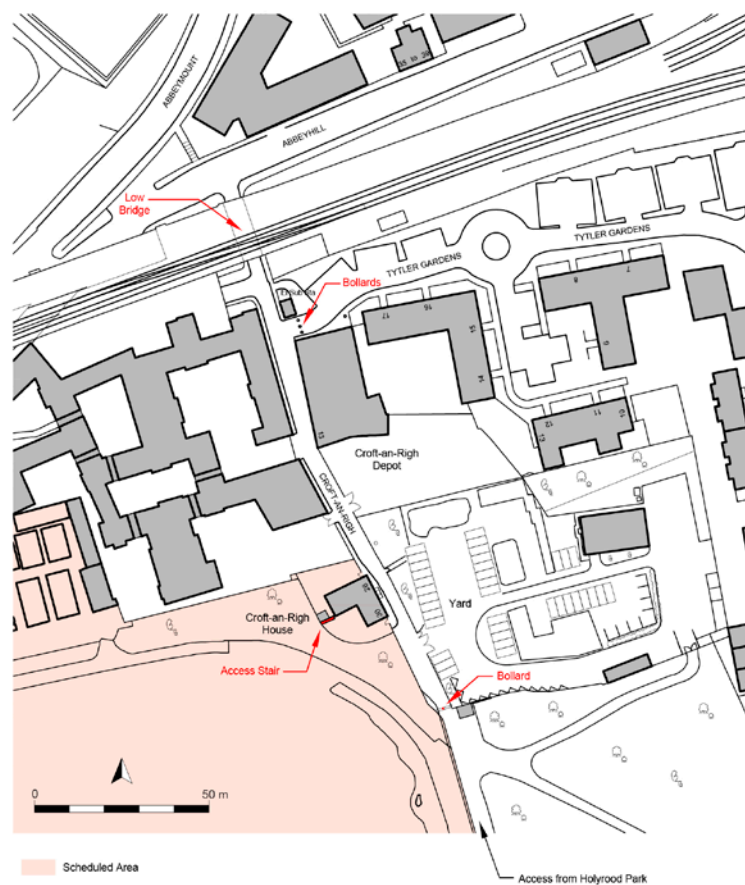


Figure 1: Location plan of the proposed works.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Relatively little is known about Croft an Righ and the land immediately surrounding it. The house, or mansion, is thought to date from the late 16th century, but displays evidence of extensive remodelling in 17th century. It is identified on Gordon of Rothiemay's 1647 map as the property of Lord Elphinstone, though his lodgings are known to have burnt down within two years of completion, which could perhaps explain the subsequent rebuilding in the later 17th century. Recent standing building recording broadly supports this and identified six key phases of development, with its initial construction probably in the late 16th/early 17th century, followed by an extension and rebuilding in the mid-17th century after extensive fire damage; further alterations particularly to the north range must have taken place in the later 17th or early 18th century as the present plan differs from that shown on Rothiemay's map.

In the 18th century, the house formed the north-east corner of a development around a courtyard with tenements belonging to the Duke of Hamilton forming the south and west sides. The house was bought by the Crown in 1854, prior to the remodelling of the Palace grounds and around this time the building was embellished and the interiors altered to accommodate staff working in the palace gardens. In the 1990's, the subdivisions were removed and conservation work was undertaken. The building is currently in use as offices for Historic Environment Scotland.

The boundary wall to the west, to which the stair adjoins, dates to the 1850's and a stair must presumably have been in this location from at least this date. Conservation records note the replacement of an earlier timber stair to the north garden in 1921. Further records in 1954 note permission being granted to form an opening and stair between Croft an Righ and the gardens of Holyroodhouse, which may suggest the creation of a new route (in the present location) or re-opening and repair to the earlier access stair. late 19th century there have only been small scale changes to the planting within the garden.

POTENTIAL IMPACT AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

The works involve the like-for-like replacement of a modern stair which provides access from Croft an Righ to the north palace gardens. The physical impact upon historic fabric is deemed to be negligible and as far as possible existing fixings will be used at the top of the stair. The new stair will be installed at a shallower angle than the existing stair, which will result in a blocked doorway in the wall to the north being partially obscured. The date of this wall is uncertain, though the archway appears to be 18th or 19th century in date, with modern blocking; the new stair will not fix into this wall and the visual impact is deemed to be minimal and will not impact upon our ability to ‘read’ or understand the structure.

Within the garden, there is potential for the survival of archaeological deposits and structures associated with ancillary buildings and earlier tenements in the grounds of Croft an Righ. There is also potential for the survival of garden deposits and evidence relating to landscaping and remodelling of the area from the late 16th century to the present day. There has been no previously recorded archaeological work carried out in the grounds of Croft an Righ and the nature of the underlying deposits are unknown.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

The proposed ground disturbance is minimal, and it is unlikely that the new foundation will impact upon significant archaeological deposits. However, given the lack of understanding of the archaeological potential in this area, the excavation for the new foundation will be undertaken under an archaeological watching brief. Once excavated, the foundation trench will be recorded to provide a clearer understanding of the below ground deposits.

DETAILS FROM HISTORIC MAPS SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROFT AN RIGH AND SURROUNDING GARDENS OVER THE 17TH AND 19TH CENTURIES



Figure 2: Detail of Gordon of Rothiemay's map of Edinburgh, 1647.

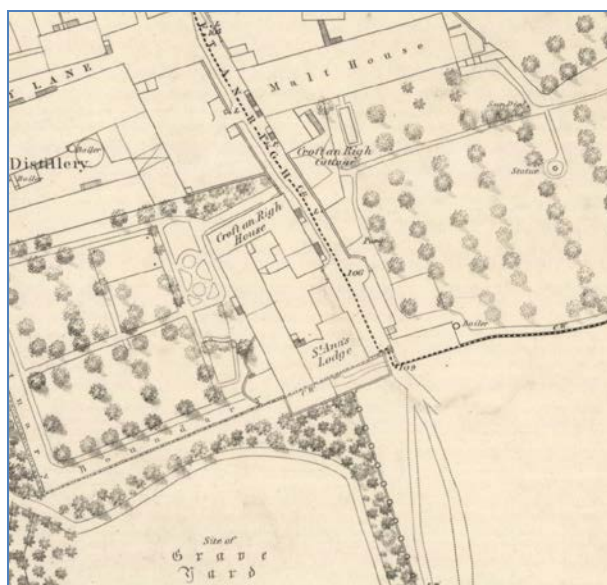


Figure 3: Detail from Ordnance Survey, Edinburgh, 1850s.

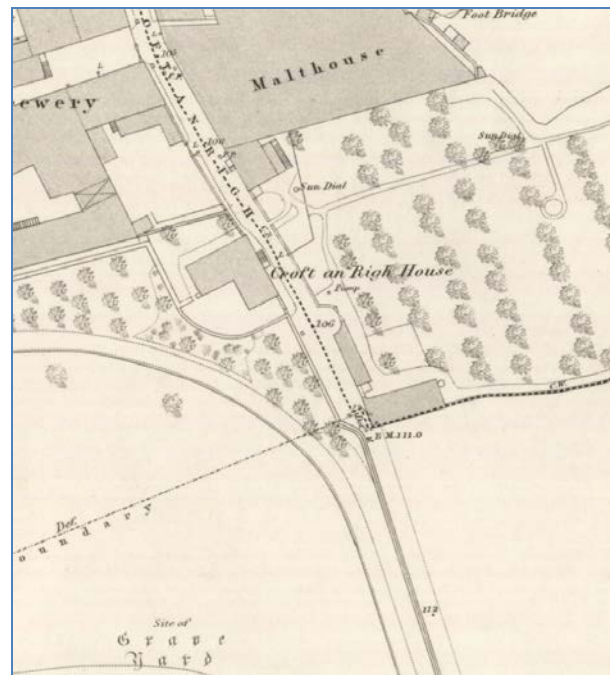


Figure 4: Detail from Ordnance Survey, Edinburgh, 1870s.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESPONSE

FIELDWORK

The archaeological work will be carried out under the terms of the HES archaeology call-off contract. If significant archaeological deposits are encountered, the HES Cultural Resources Advisor will be contacted; excavation will be adjourned and the findings (to date) recorded.

MONITORING

This will entail:

- The presence on site of at least one site archaeologist during all ground breaking works.
- The archaeologist should be able to direct rate, location and method of excavation employed by contractor.
- The archaeologist should suspend excavation if necessary, in order to examine / clean / retrieve any archaeological features, surfaces, structures or artefacts that may be exposed during excavation.
- All spoil will be suitably stored for examination before backfill/reinstatement.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

This will entail:

Drawing

- Confirmation of site plan as supplied by the Client.
- Location plan of all interventions at a suitable scale, 1:50/1:100.
- Detailed, individual area plans of all interventions – at significant stages of excavation if appropriate and on completion of excavation, drawn at a scale of 1:20.
- All sections, or a representative selection, will be drawn in detail at a scale of 1:10.
- All drawing will be annotated with site feature numbers, site code, scale, date and name(s) of staff.

Photography

- Still photographs will be colour digital and will record general location of works, plus detailed coverage during, and on completion of, excavation.
- All photographs will have a suitable scale visible.
- All photographs will be listed in a full photo register (describing content, orientation and date).
- 'Documentary' photographs will also be taken in order to represent site conditions, constraints and resources.
- If appropriate, digital moving coverage will be taken for further illustration of site conditions, constraints and resources.

Site Recording: Buried Archaeology

- Description of all excavated material will be expressed in terms of archaeological features, each of which will be assigned a unique three digit number. The numbering will also reference the site code and any individual trench number.
- Each discrete feature will be described on site *pro forma* which will cover stratigraphic relationships, finds, physical description, location, drawing references and interpretation.
- Each feature will also be listed in a feature register – comprising a brief description, date, and feature number.

Sampling

When required, three levels of sampling are proposed for above and below ground investigations:

- **General:** Bulk sample per context removed.
- **Special:** Specific sample identified for later specialist study (charcoal, industrial waste, environmental, infestations, organics).
- **Specialist:** Monitoring of any independent sampling strategy from external specialists (dendrochronological, mortar, paint, *etc.*)

GENERAL ISSUES

In the event of the discovery of significant remains and/or artefacts, which may be impacted by the proposed works, excavation should be suspended until further instruction is received from relevant agencies. At this point the Historic Environment Scotland CRT should also be informed and consulted.

All artefacts, faunal remains and samples will be processed off-site. Disposal and/or examination/ conservation of this material will be assessed in the light of results of fieldwork. Any programme of specialist post-excavation work on finds, faunal remains and analysis of samples will be assessed on completion of the fieldwork

Any human remains revealed during the excavation will remain *in situ*. All discoveries of human remains will be reported to the local police and Historic Environment Scotland CRT.

If human remains are to be excavated during any subsequent work, this will be completed in line with Historic Scotland policy on the treatment of human remains.

REPORTING

The results of the Fieldwork and DBA will be presented in an illustrated Data Structures Report (DSR) with accompanying digital documentation as specified by the Historic Environment Scotland CRT.

Copies of the report and digital files will be produced as specified. Typically this comprises:

- Four bound paper copies.
- Two digital versions on CD including all photographs (the latter in .tiff or jpeg format).

This will include an assessment of all assemblages and recommendations for any further specialist work.

A costed programme for the full sample analysis towards publication of the findings will be included if appropriate.

A short note will be submitted to 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland'.

The position of all trenches, excavation areas *etc.*, will be supplied on CD disk, as a georeferenced .dxf file.

Reports will be submitted within 20 working days of completion of the fieldwork.

ARCHIVE

If there is no further requirement for reporting beyond the DSR and D&E entry, the report and site records will be compiled in a suitable archive comprising primary data and digital documentation as appropriate, suitable for submission to local and national archives.

The archive will follow current guidelines for archival standards set by the Archaeology Data Service and RCAHMS.

The project archive will be deposited with the NMRS within six months of completion of fieldwork and relevant post-excavation analyses. Finds will be subject to the Scots laws of Treasure Trove and *Bona Vacantia*, and will be reported to the Crown Agent for disposal. Appropriate conservation of finds will be conducted before disposal.

Gordon Ewart
30th September, 2016